

National Alpaca Farm Days
September 25, 2010
Wilson County Fairgrounds
Lebanon, TN
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
FREE ADMISSION



More Info: Tennessee Alpaca Association www.tnalpaca.org
or www.alpacafarmday.com

Farms from Middle Tennessee area will be showing off their Alpaca's September 25, 2010. You will have the opportunity to see and feel the Alpaca's and their fiber. We will have demo's for you to participate in; from spinning to wet felting fiber. This is a great educational opportunity for children and adults to see how raw fiber can be made into something wearable.

Designer/textile students and instructor's - check out the Student Design Competition information. We also have a Scarf Competition currently under way.

The TAA "Pick TN Product Store" will have raw fiber, yarn and Alpaca fashions for sale.

No animal sales will be permitted during the event, yet individual farms may have a sales list. If you are interested in Alpaca ownership, farm owner's will be happy to answer your questions and schedule a private visit.

Feel free to contact me; Melody Weist 615-286-4166 or ellemae@me.com

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Alpaca's were first imported to the United States in 1984. The alpaca's played a central role in the Incan culture that was located on the high Andean Plateau and mountains of South America. Alpaca's are now being successfully raised and enjoyed throughout North America and abroad. Current estimates total over 100,000 registered alpacas with the Alpaca Registry, Inc (ARI) in the United States and more that 4,000 Alpaca Owner and Breeder's Association (AOBA) members in North America.

There are two (2) types of alpaca-the Huacaya (we-Kye-ah) and Suri (Soo-ree). Huacaya fiber has a fluffy, extremely fine coat. The Suri has fiber that is silky and resembles pencil-locks. Alpacas are social animals that seek companionship, and communicate by softly humming. The life span is about 20 years and gestation is 11.5 months. Adult alpaca's are about 36" tall at the withers and generally weigh between 100 and 200 pounds. Alpaca's do not have incisor teeth, horns, hooves or claws. Alpaca's produce some of the finest and luxurious natural fiber in about 22 basic colors. Fiber is clipped (sheared) once (1) per year. Alpacas do not require any brushing or grooming. They do have toe nails, which must be trimmed every so often. Some minimal monthly herd health is highly advised.

Alpaca's are adorable, and their fiber is similar to cashmere with a silky feel. Garments made from alpaca yarn are durable, natural, and just feel wonderful. Most alpaca farms have onsite stores with alpaca yarn, roving and fashion's on display. There is also a fiber mill located in Gallatin, TN.

Yes, they are related to Llamas and Camels, which are their much larger cousins. Because the alpacas can be raised on relatively small acreage and they are clean, safe, quiet, intelligent and disease resistant, the raising of alpacas is both a business venture and a source of pleasure. Parents of children can enjoy the benefits of owning and caring for alpaca's as a rewarding family experience. For those looking at retirement, this venture provides a business and lifestyle transtition from the fast-paced corporate way of life. Looking for a tax-friendly agricultural business and return investment? Then reseach all aspects of alpaca ownership and farming.

For instance; the newly created AOBA Youth Association (AYA) works with all youth organizations such as 4H, FFA and Scouts to name a few. There are plenty of family oriented alpaca events around the country, including local and state fairs, event and educational shows hosted by Alpaca Organizations. The youth association will provide opportunities to learn more about alpaca's, participate in youth shows, leadership training, and education as well as learning how to become our future successful alpaca breeders.

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The Earth-Friendly Alpaca

Alpaca's have been domesticated for more than 5,000 years. They are one of Mother Nature's favorite farm animals. They are freindly to their environment in every aspect. The following physical attributes allow alpacas to maintain their harmony with our Mother Earth.

- The alpaca's feet are padded and they leave terrain undamaged as they browse on native grass.
- The alpaca is a modified ruminant with a three compartment stomach. It converts grass and hay to energy very efficienttly, eating less that other farm animals.
- It's camelid ancestry allows the alpaca to thrive without consuming very much water, although an abundant, fresh water supplu is necessary.
- The alpaca does not usually eat or destroy trees, preferring tender grasses, which it does not pull up by the roots.
- Gardeners find the alpacas rich manure perfect for growing flowers, fruits and vegetables, as it composts quickly and does not burn plants.